

Foster Parent Connections - December 20, 2024

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December 20, 2024

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Announcements



Pyx Health

The holiday season is often described with words like exciting, fun, and family. But it can also evoke feelings like stress, loneliness, and sadness—especially for those involved in the child welfare system. For these individuals, the holidays may bring out feelings of isolation, depression, and anxiety.

To support members during these challenging times, Pyx Health is available as an additional health benefit through Show Me Healthy Kids, managed by Home State Health. Pyx Health connects teens (13 and older) to resources that address loneliness, isolation, and depression via an app, phone calls, or texts. The app offers 24/7 access to helpful tools, activities, and services.

For guardians of teens, the challenges of caregiving can feel overwhelming, especially during the holidays. Pyx Health is also available—free of charge—to guardians, providing:

- Unlimited calls with trained staff who understand the unique demands of raising teens.
- Activities and tools to reduce stress and offer support.
- Access to resources, such as respite care, support groups, and more.

This holiday season, let Pyx Health help you and your teen navigate challenges and find the support you need.

Learn more at PyxHealth.com or call Pyx at 1-855-499-4777 or contact [Show Me Healthy Kids \(SMHK\)](#) at 1-877-236-1020 ext. 6080448.

Seasonal Affective Disorder

The holiday season can be tough for young people. They might deal with family separation, difficult relationships, or feelings of sadness. As the days get shorter and the weather turns cold, some may experience Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), which can cause mental health issues, especially in teens and young adults. Common signs of SAD include changes in mood, trouble sleeping, feeling very tired, not wanting to eat, avoiding friends, and having negative thoughts.

It's important for adults, like caseworkers, to notice these signs when they visit homes. They should talk openly with young people and their families about mental health. Caseworkers can help by discussing what to look for and what to do.

Here are some helpful resources for youth in need:

- SAMHSA's helpline: 800-662-HELP (4357) or text your zip code to 435748.
- The Trevor Lifeline: 1-866-488-7386 or text START to 678678 for LGBTQ support.
- Crisis Text Line: Text "HOME" to 741741 for help.
- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: Call or text 988 for support.

Holidays and Foster Kids

December can be extra rough for children/youth in foster care. Below are some tips/articles/resources that might help:

<https://www.fosterclub.com/12ideas>

<https://blog.adoptuskids.org/why-the-holidays-can-be-hard-and-how-to-make-them-better/>

What If We Don't Celebrate Christmas? {but your foster child does}

<https://adoptionnetwork.com/adoptive-parents/parenting/holidays/what-if-we-dont-celebrate-christmas/>

How Do You Celebrate Christmas If You (or Your Foster Child) Don't Celebrate Christmas'?

<https://ukfostering.org.uk/how-do-you-celebrate-christmas-if-you-or-your-foster-child-dont-celebrate-christmas/>

Greif resources: <https://www.samhsa.gov/coping-bereavement-grief>

Help Us Name Our New Information System!



You have the chance to help shape the next generation of Children's Division's future.

Help us pick the name of our new computer documentation system that best describes our agency now and what best describes your vision of our agency.

The possible names include:

ARCH - Automated Resources for Children

HARBOUR - Helping At-Risk Families Build Opportunities and Understanding Resources

MOFACS - MO Families and Children System

Use the button below or the QR Code to submit your vote today!

[Vote on a Name](#)

The Call to Foster Podcast



The Call to Foster Podcast: S2E12

["If we don't take care of ourselves, how are we going to take care of our kids?"](#)

This month's guest, Micah Smiley, shares her experience as a "medical home." Micah is currently a respite only foster home, but she started as a full foster home! Micah even moved to a new home to get closer to medical care for a child in her home. This episode is full of great information for anyone who is considering the opportunity

to care for these children!

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a foster parent, learn how to get started on our website: <https://dss.mo.gov/cd/foster-care/becoming-a-foster-parent.htm>

Please subscribe to and share this podcast with anyone you know who might be considering fostering! You can listen to the podcast on most popular podcast platforms.

Trainings & Events



Licensed Resource Providers Annual In-Service Training Requirement for 2024

The training is an overview on medical forms, informed consent, Alternative Consenter, and pharmacy information. The purpose of this mandatory training is to provide licensed resource providers with critical information that must be followed when a child or youth in Division custody is prescribed a psychotropic medication and placed in their home. Successful completion of training will require the licensed resource provider to pass the quiz with a score of 80% or more. When the training is complete, need to take a screen shot of the quiz completion score. E-mail the screen shot to your licensing worker along with your name/date completed and put D170 in the subject line. If you do not have access to the online training, you can request a paper copy from your licensing worker. **This training must be completed by December 31, 2024.**

Click the link to the training and find the training under **Annual In-Service 2024**

In-service Training 2024

The following links will take you to a multitude of training opportunities that are available for in-service hours:

[Parent Cafe Training Institute \(missouri.edu\)](https://missouri.edu/parent-cafe-training-institute)

[Foster Parent College - Online Training for Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Parents and Caregivers](#)

[Training | Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)

[All Courses - FosterAdopt Connect Training \(thinkific.com\)](#)

[Family Development Training - Central Missouri Foster Care and Adoption Association](#)

[Training for Parents | Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition \(foster-adopt.org\)](#)

Tips & Reminders



Are you in need of help or assistance as a Foster Parent? We have Foster Care Ambassadors who are seasoned current or former Foster parents willing to be a mentor to another Foster family. If you are interested, please email FosterCare@dss.mo.gov and we will pair you up with a Foster Care Ambassador. This is for all foster parents whether you are brand new or have been fostering for a long time. It is for all of our families whether traditional, relative, emergency, respite, or elevated needs. To find an Ambassador click the link below. There will be a map on the page and if you hover over a county it will tell you who the Ambassador is for each county.

We do not have Ambassadors in every county so if you are interested in becoming an Ambassador, please email FosterCare@dss.mo.gov and we will get you started!

[Find an Ambassador](#)



Children's Division Caregiver Portal

The Children's Division now has a Children's Division Caregiver Portal for foster, relative, respite, legal guardianship and adoptive families! This portal is the first phase of a multi-year project. This phase allows caregivers to see their demographics, what placements they have, and their financial information. To visit this portal please log into https://my.mo.gov/gsp?id=childrens_division_caregiver_portal.

If you have any trouble, please email FosterCare@dss.mo.gov and we will assist you.

Turn In Your Monthly Medical Log and Travel Log

This is a reminder to complete/turn in your Monthly Medical Log and Travel Log to the case manager(s) when you see them every month. You need to complete a Medical Log (CD-265) for every child every month even if they had no medical appointments and/or do not take medication. This form is required to document consent decisions for routine medical care and provide a medical history for the youth each month. If they are in your home only part of the time, please fill one out for the time the child was there. Your cooperation with this is greatly appreciated. The medical and travel log are now available on the I am a Foster Parent web page. [Children's Division | Missouri Department of Social Services \(mo.gov\)](#)

Foster Parent Identification Cards

All Foster Parents should have a Foster Parent ID card. This is provided to you after you are licensed. If you do not have an ID card please email FosterCare@dss.mo.gov and we will get you the application.

We want to hear from you! If there is information you would like covered in the next Foster Parent Connections Newsletters email, Melissa.J.Selsor@dss.mo.gov.



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